

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously amended) A gathering and picking device comprising: a gathering element, which is rotated about an approximately vertical rotational axis and is arranged to grasp plant stalks; a picking gap having an effective length, wherein the plant stalks are transported along the effective length of the picking gap by the gathering element; and the picking gap is curved along the effective length such that the effective length of the picking gap is an essentially constant distance from the rotational axis of the gathering element.

2. (Previously amended) The gathering and picking device as defined by claim 1 wherein the gathering element is provided with fingers that extend radially outward from the rotational axis, wherein the fingers are oriented substantially perpendicular to the effective length of the picking gap.

3. (Previously amended) The gathering and picking device as defined by claim 2 wherein the picking gap has an end region outside the effective length, wherein the end region is spaced a greater distance from the rotational axis of the gathering element than the distance to the effective length of the picking gap.

4. (Original) The gathering and picking device as defined by claim 1 wherein a picking roll is arranged beneath the picking gap, the picking roll having an inlet zone and the picking gap having an inlet region, the inlet zone of the picking roll is situated beneath the inlet region of the picking gap.

5. (Original) The gathering and picking device as defined by claim 2 wherein a picking roll is arranged beneath the picking gap, the picking roll having an inlet zone and the picking gap having an inlet region, the inlet zone of the picking roll is situated beneath the inlet region of the picking gap.

6. (Original) The gathering and picking device as defined by claim 3 wherein a picking roll is arranged beneath the picking gap, the picking roll having an inlet zone and the picking gap having an inlet region, the inlet zone of the picking roll is situated beneath the inlet region of the picking gap.